

IN THE CLAIMS

*The status of the claims as presently amended is as follows:*

1. (*Currently Amended*) A system for managing an information service which handles contribution and distribution of digital music contents and presentation of advertising messages to users of the information service via a plurality of user terminals including first and second user terminals over a computer network, the system comprising:

a first database containing advertising messages provided from advertisers that subscribe to the information service with payment of advertisement fees;

a second database containing a plurality of digital music contents which are subject to legal protection on behalf of content proprietors;

a-delivering presenting section that delivers the advertising messages over the computer network to the users via the plurality of user terminals;

a-receiving contributing section that receives a modified digital music content from one of the user via the first user terminal together with status information indicating that the received modified digital music content is subject to the legal protection and identifying a content proprietor of the received one digital music content that represents a music piece that has been modified as the modified digital music content, which is created as a secondary work by the one user, who is different from the identified content proprietor, wherein the secondary work by the one user is a modified version of a digital content provided by the content proprietor;

a registering section that registers the received modified digital music content into the second database together with the status information;

another-a receiving section that receives a request for delivery of the registered modified digital music content from the second user terminal;

another-delivering-a distributing section that delivers the registered modified digital music content to another of the user via the second user terminal when receiving the request from the another user over the computer network; and

an allocating section that allocates at least a part of the advertisement fees collected from the subscribing advertisers to the content proprietor of the registered modified digital music content identified in the status information.

2. (*Currently Amended*) The system according to claim 1, wherein the second database contains protected digital music contents subject to legal protection and non-protected digital music contents not subject to legal protection, such that the allocating section allocates the

collected advertisement fees to the proprietors only when the protected digital music contents are delivered to the users via the user terminals.

3. (*Currently Amended*) The system according to claim 1, wherein the allocating section allocates the collected advertisement fees only if the registered digital music content is delivered under the legal protection as indicated by the status information.

4. (*Currently Amended*) The system according to claim 1, wherein the second database contains a multiple of digital music contents subject to legal protection on behalf of the same proprietor, such that the allocating section allocates a part of the collected advertisement fees to the same proprietor when any of the multiple of the digital music contents is delivered to the users via the user terminals.

5. (*Currently Amended*) A method of managing an information service which handles contribution and distribution of digital music contents and presentation of advertising messages to users of the information service via a plurality of user terminals including first and second user terminals over a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first database containing advertising messages provided from advertisers that subscribe to the information service with payment of advertisement fees;

providing a second database containing a plurality of digital music contents which are subject to legal protection on behalf of content proprietors;

delivering the advertising messages over the computer network to the users via the plurality of the user terminals;

receiving a modified digital music content from one of the users via the first user terminal together with status information indicating that the received modified digital music content is subject to the legal protection and identifying a content proprietor of the received one digital music content that represents a music piece has been modified, which is created as a secondary work by the one user, who is different from the identified content proprietor, wherein the secondary work by the one user is a modified version of a digital content provided by the content proprietor;

registering the received modified digital music content into the second database together with the status information;

receiving a request for delivery of the registered modified digital music content from the second user terminal;

delivering the registered modified digital music content to another of the users via the second user terminal when receiving the request from the another user over the computer network; and

allocating at least a part of the advertisement fees collected from the subscribing advertisers to the content proprietor of the registered modified digital music content identified in the status information.

6. (*Currently Amended*) The method according to claim 5, wherein the second database contains protected digital music contents subject to legal protection and non-protected digital music contents not subject to legal protection, such that the allocating of the collected advertisement fees to the proprietors is effected only when the protected digital music contents are delivered to the users via the user terminals.

7. (*Currently Amended*) The method according to claim 5, wherein the allocating of the collected advertisement fees is effected only if the registered digital music content is delivered under the legal protection as indicated by the status information.

8. (*Currently Amended*) The method according to claim 5, wherein the second database contains a multiple of digital music contents subject to legal protection on behalf of the same proprietor, such that a part of the collected advertisement fees is allocated to the same proprietor when any of the multiple of the digital music contents is delivered to the users via the user terminals.

9. (*Currently Amended*) A machine readable medium for use in a server having a CPU and managing an information service which handles contribution and distribution of digital music contents and presentation of advertising messages to users of the information service via a plurality of user terminals including first and second user terminals over a computer network, the medium containing program instructions executable by the CPU for causing the server to perform the steps of:

managing a first database containing advertising messages provided from advertisers that subscribe to the information service with payment of advertisement fees;

managing a second database containing a plurality of digital music contents which are subject to legal protection on behalf of content proprietors;

delivering the advertising messages over the computer network to the users via the plurality of the user terminals;

receiving a modified digital music content from one of the users via the first user terminal together with status information indicating that the received modified digital music content is subject to the legal protection and identifying a content proprietor of the received one digital music content that represents a music piece that has been modified as the modified digital music content, which is created as a secondary work by the one user, who is different from the identified content proprietor, wherein the secondary work by the one user is a modified version of a digital content provided by the content proprietor;

registering the received modified digital music content into the second database together with the status information;

receiving a request for delivery of the registered modified digital music content from the second user terminal;

delivering the registered modified digital music content to another of the users via the second user terminal when receiving the request from the another user over the computer network; and

allocating at least a part of the advertisement fees collected from the subscribing advertisers to the content proprietor of the registered modified digital music content identified in the status information.

10. (*Currently Amended*) The machine readable medium according to claim 9, wherein the second database contains protected digital music contents subject to legal protection and non-protected digital music contents not subject to legal protection, such that the allocating of the collected advertisement fees to the proprietors is effected only when the protected digital music contents are delivered to the users via the user terminals.

11. (*Currently Amended*) The machine readable medium according to claim 9, wherein the allocating of the collected advertisement fees is effected only if the registered digital music content is delivered under the legal protection as indicated by the status information.

12. (*Currently Amended*) The machine readable medium according to claim 9, wherein the second database contains a multiple of digital music contents subject to legal protection on behalf of the same proprietor, such that a part of the collected advertisement fees is allocated to the same proprietor when any of the multiple of the digital music contents is delivered to the users via the user terminals.

13. (*Currently Amended*) A computer-readable storage device storing a computer program executable by a server for managing an information service which handles contribution and distribution of digital music contents and presentation of advertising messages to users of the information service via a plurality of user terminals including first and second user terminals over a computer network, the computer program comprising instructions for:

managing a first database containing advertising messages provided from advertisers that subscribe to the information service with payment of advertisement fees;

managing a second database containing a plurality of digital music contents which are subject to legal protection on behalf of content proprietors;

delivering the advertising messages over the computer network to the users via the plurality of user terminals;

receiving a modified digital music content from one of the users via the first user terminal together with status information indicating that the received modified digital music content is subject to the legal protection and identifying a content proprietor of the received one digital music content that represents a music piece that has been modified as the modified digital music content, which is created as a secondary work by the one user, who is different from the identified content proprietor, wherein the secondary work by the one user is a modified version of a digital content provided by the content proprietor;

registering the received modified digital music content into the second database together with the status information;

receiving a request for delivery of the registered modified digital music content from the second user terminal;

delivering the registered modified digital music content to another of the users via the second user terminal when receiving the request from the another user over the computer network; and

allocating at least a part of the advertisement fees collected from the subscribing advertisers to the content proprietor of the registered modified digital music content identified in the status information.

14. (*Currently Amended*) The computer-readable storage device according to claim 13, wherein the second database contains protected digital music contents subject to legal protection and non-protected digital music contents not subject to legal protection, such that the allocating of the collected advertisement fees to the proprietors is effected only when the protected digital music contents are delivered to the users via the user terminals.

15. (*Currently Amended*) The computer-readable storage device according to claim 13, wherein the allocating of the collected advertisement fees is effected only if the registered digital music content is delivered under the legal protection as indicated by the status information.

16. (*Currently Amended*) The computer-readable storage device according to claim 13, wherein the second database contains a multiple of digital music contents subject to legal protection on behalf of the same proprietor, such that a part of the collected advertisement fees is allocated to the same proprietor when any of the multiple of the digital music contents is delivered to the users via the user terminals.

17-20. (*Canceled*)